

## THE CALL AND MINISTRY SERVICE OF THE APOSTLE

(August 1995 - K&D Bassett)

1. **The call into Apostolic service requires a period of some time**, in which God reveals His will by prophetic revelations, and by giving a number of foundational verses of Scripture upon which to build the ministry, *Ac 13:2* - note the tense used. The call to apostolic ministry had been upon Barnabas and Saul for some time.
2. **Part of the call is the vision that God reveals.** For example one vision, given during times of prayer, was of an outline map of Northland, NZ, upon which were superimposed many tongues of fire. These tongues of fire increased in size and number until the whole of Northland was a blaze of fire by the Holy Spirit.
3. Gradually step by step, those whom God calls in this way, are brought to a place where they give up all dependence upon a secular job of self support, **to rely on God alone for full provision of every need.** *Phil 4:19, Ex 36:4, Ex 25:8, Ruth 2:12, 1K 17:14.*
4. Because the apostle is **appointed to a region containing many churches** for which God has given him/her responsibility, he/she is required to do a lot of travelling about from church to church.
5. As **there is only one church in the eyes of God, to which all believers belong**, the apostle God appoints must be **non-denominational** and carry in his heart all churches, leaders and believers, who will recognise his calling, gifting and ministry in his appointed sphere or region.
6. The apostle's authority is not an organisational or structural authority. It is dependent upon the **development of personal relationships with leaders and churches** based on servanthood, trust, faithfulness, humility, wisdom, integrity, reliability, consistency, hard work, and on the recognition of the anointing and authority of God.
7. To understand the position of the apostle it is important to grasp the difference between the **local church, and "the work"** to which the apostle is called, *Ac 15:38, Ac 13:2, Ac 14:26.*

In any local communicable locality God's purpose is the local church with its leadership and congregation of believers, worshipping God, building up the saints, thrusting out with the gospel, and gathering in the lost. But **over a specific region or sphere**, which includes many local churches, **God raises up an apostolic ministry** to establish and strengthen leaders and church congregations, bringing great encouragement, light, understanding and correction or redirection where necessary, *Tit 2:15, 2Cor 13:10.* The apostle binds the churches in the region together so that they will support one another with visiting teams of ministry, joining together for men's/women's camps, worship seminars and the like. In Northland, NZ, church leaders have been able to meet regularly for worship, intercession, and sharing. Also many churches have been meeting together for days of prayer and fasting.

8. One Biblical picture of apostolic ministry that the Holy Spirit has shown us, is given in Solomon's Temple. Outside the doors of the Temple, were two free standing pillars,

called Jachin and Boaz, which mean “He shall establish” and “in Him is strength,” respectively, *2Chr 3:17, Rev 3:12*. The Holy Spirit has shown us that these two functions are the work of the apostle. He/she is to establish and strengthen leaders and their churches. That is, each church needs, standing closely beside them, the input of this ministry on a regular basis, and their constant intercession, care and love.

9. **Each apostolic team has an allotted sphere or region, *2Cor 10:13-16***, in which they travel about. Over their region God gives them authority, acceptance and recognition, so that they can encourage, build up, serve, establish, protect and support the local churches and leaders. *2Cor 13:10* says that apostolic authority is given to build up and not destroy, *2Cor 10:8*.
10. Those whom God calls to “the work,”(see 7 above), are **firstly servants of the churches to whom they are sent**, rather than exercising control over them. In some traditional denominations, the “Bishop” or regular overseer, is more of an authority figure than a shepherd responsible to feed, protect and help guide the churches in his diocese or region. The New Testament apostle is firstly a father and shepherd to the leaders and churches, but also carries considerable authority which is not always at first apparent. There are times when he/she is required to bring strong correction and redirection, with love and humility, and sometimes with tears.
11. **It is very important that the apostle keeps looking to God alone as his/her financial support.** For this, he/she must have determined strong faith in God and His promises. God calls out and sends the apostle into the work and so He alone is the Source of supply, *Is 48:16b, Jer 1:5,7,8,9,10*. Very occasionally the apostle may incur considerable expense in the work and receive nothing in return from the church(es) he/she has been ministering to. There are many reasons why this could happen, and the apostle must always go to God, his Employer and Source of supply.
12. **Faith is probably the greatest requirement for the apostle.** Faith in God and His total over-ruling and provision are essential. The promises of God and the revealed scriptures must be constantly kept in the realm of active faith appropriation and confession. When attacked and criticised, the apostle must not act in the flesh but trust God as the vindicator of all issues, *Num 16:3,4, 14:5*. Dying to self daily is the only safe place and abiding in the Cross is the place of rest. *Heb 11:6, 2Pet 1:4, Lk 9:23, Heb 10:23*.
13. Along with faith is the need of **endurance, *Heb 10:36***. Sometimes periods of determined endurance are necessary before the breakthrough comes. Someone said it is like breaking rocks with a sledgehammer. The rock is struck ninety-nine times and on the hundredth blow it falls to pieces. Do not give up on the 99<sup>th</sup> blow, *Heb 6:12*.
14. Loneliness is often a problem that is hard to bear for the travelling ministry. For this reason it is a great help to move with others in a team.
15. The apostle also needs input into his/her life from other mature servants of God. As the leaders of the local churches grow in maturity the apostle will receive encouragement, direction and strength from those he/she has ministered to in the past.